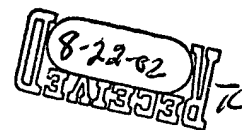


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transport processor 150 may be used to combine video, associated audio, and assets, such as navigation assets. The method 300 then proceeds to step 345.

On page 19, replace the ABSTRACT with the following amended ABSTRACT:

ABSTRACT

A method and apparatus for transport encoded asset data and content data, multiplexing the transport encoded content data with a plurality of NULL transport packets to provide "place holder" for the asset data transport packets, and replacing the NULL transport packets with asset data transport packets prior to transmitting the multiplexed transport stream to a set top box.

IN THE CLAIMS

Replace claims 1, 6, 7, 10, 11, 16 and 17 with the following claims 1 (amended), 6 (amended), 7 (amended), 16 (amended) and 17 (amended) as follows:

1. (amended) In an information distribution system providing content data and asset data to at least one subscriber, apparatus comprising:
- a NULL packet inserter, for inserting NULL transport packets within a transport stream including content packets; and
 - a transport processor, for replacing at least some of said NULL packets with asset packets associated with said content packets to produce a transport stream including content packets and asset packets.
6. (amended) The apparatus of claim 1, wherein said NULL packet inserter is responsive to a bandwidth reservation signal to provide a number of NULL packets inserted into said transport stream including content packets.
7. (amended) The apparatus of claim 2, wherein said second transport packetizer provides mapping data indicative of the location of NULL packets within said transport stream including content packets and NULL packets.

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Sub Box
10. (amended) In an information distribution system providing content data and asset data to at least one subscriber, a method for processing content and asset information comprising the steps of:

inserting, within a transport stream including content packets, a plurality of NULL packets; and

replacing at least some of said NULL packets with asset packets associated with said content packets to produce a transport stream including content packets and asset packets.

AS
Sub Box
11. (amended) The method of claim 10, wherein said asset packets are processed according to the steps of:

packetizing, using a transport packetizer, at least one information stream comprising an asset information stream, said asset information stream being associated with a content stream.

Sub Box
16. (amended) The method of claim 10, wherein said step of inserting said asset packets is repeated according to an asset injection count.

17. (amended) The method of claim 11, further comprising the steps of:

interacting with a subscriber to receive a content request;

retrieving a transport stream including said requested content packets and any inserted NULL packets; and

transporting, to said requesting subscriber, a transport stream including said transport stream including said requested content and said inserted asset packets.

REMARKS

This amendment is intended as a full and complete response to the non-final Office Action dated May 22, 2002. In the Office Action, the Examiner notes that claims 1-17 stand rejected and claim 16 stands objected to. By this amendment, claims 1, 6,